

SPECIAL ISSUES AND RISK FACTORS IN YOUTH BEREAVEMENT

SPECIAL ISSUES

1. Compared to Adult Bereavement, Youth Bereavement differs in both the expression of grief and the mourning process. This is due to the specific Developmental Tasks Youth are faced with.
2. The death of a loved one can interrupt the Youth Developmental process.
3. Youth often idealize the deceased.
4. A Sudden Death increases the Youth's need for security.
5. Youth do not want to be different from their peers. A death in the family makes them feel different.
6. Youth may feel that nobody understands them, therefore may not express their feelings.
7. Youth may not grieve until their parents have grieved - yet they MUST.
8. Youth often assume too many adult responsibilities in an effort to replace a parent who has died.
9. Bereaved Youth usually experience a great deal of resentment and anger which needs to be expressed appropriately.
10. Bereaved Youth need permission to mourn and require guidance and information during this complex process.

RISK FACTORS

1. Ambivalent or conflicting relationships with the deceased.
2. Pre-existing psychological or family difficulties.
3. Surviving parent who is psychologically vulnerable.
4. Lack of adequate family or community support.
5. Unstable, inconsistent environment.
6. Loss of same sex parent during Youth.
7. Death by suicide or homicide.